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TAGS: [KCFE](#) [NATO](#) [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [GE](#)
SUBJECT: CFE: GERMANY REACTS POSITIVELY TO U.S. THINKING ON
ELEMENTS FOR A FINAL DOCUMENT

REF: A. STATE 77371
[1](#)B. BERLIN 1107

Classified By: ACTING DCM JOHN BAUMAN. REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) We delivered ref A points on U.S. thinking on elements for a final document for the June 12-15 CFE Extraordinary Conference to Amb. Friedrich Groening, MFA Director for Disarmament and Arms Control, June 5 and then followed-up with him June 6 to get his reactions right before he left for Brussels to attend the Quad pre-coordination meeting.

Praises U.S. nonpaper for positive approach

[1](#)2. (C) Groening praised the U.S. nonpaper for taking a positive approach and focusing on how the Allies can engage the Russians and meet their concerns. He thought some of its elements (i.e., equipment reduction commitments, reaffirmation from the Baltic countries and Slovenia that they plan to join the A/CFE when possible, etc.) should be incorporated into the final conference document.

Agrees on no re-negotiation of A/CFE

[1](#)3. (C) Groening said he shared the U.S. view that the apparent Russian attempt to eliminate or re-negotiate the flank regime was "cause for concern." While he thought the Allies should be open to discuss Russian views regarding the flank regime, Groening agreed that there could no be question about re-negotiating or changing the A/CFE at this stage. Any proposed changes to the flank regime could only be entertained once the A/CFE had been ratified and brought into force.

Wants to avoid a NATO vs. Russia stance

[1](#)4. (C) Groening raised some concerns about the emphasis in the U.S. nonpaper on a strong, unified Allied message to the Russians. While not denying the necessity of a common NATO position on the key issues, he thought it was important not to give the Russians the impression of the Allies "acting as a NATO block," with each Ally just repeating what the previous one had said. He thought this could create a

confrontational atmosphere in Vienna and would not facilitate dialogue with the Russians.

¶5. (C) Groening also thought it would not be helpful to just repeat the standard NATO line that the Allies would ratify A/CFE once the Istanbul Commitments had been met. Since the Russians do not accept the linkage between A/CFE ratification and the Istanbul commitments, simply repeating this demand over and over could be counterproductive. It would be better to be forward looking, as proposed in the U.S. nonpaper.

¶6. (C) Finally, Groening questioned whether it would be a good idea to issue a statement at the conference reaffirming NATO's adherence to the language of the NATO-Russia Founding Act. He was concerned that this would reinforce an impression of NATO versus Russia in Vienna.

TIMKEN JR